



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS BRIGADE
UNITED STATES ARMY NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION
UNIT 21420
APO AE 09705-1420

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ACDP-CPO

27 July 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: US Army NATO Brigade (USANATO) Policy Letter #7, Civilian Incentive Awards

1. Purpose. This regulation sets forth the policy, responsibilities and procedures for processing civilian incentive awards within the US Army NATO. Other Federal and non-Federal awards not covered by this regulation may be found in Army Regulation 672-20, Incentive Awards.

2. Policy.

a. The incentive awards program is administered as part of the Civilian Personnel Program and is governed by AR 672-20. The awards program will be administered entirely on the basis of merit and without regard to age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, or physical or mental handicap.

b. The approval authority for all awards remains with the Brigade Commander, US Army NATO unless otherwise specified in AR 672-20, delegated or required by higher authority (e.g. Commanding General US Army NATO, Secretary of the Army, etc.).

c. Incentive awards will be coordinated to the fullest extent practicable with management and productivity improvement programs, industrial health and safety, value engineering, energy conservation and other manpower and resource utilization efforts.

d. Awards must be related to official duties and should not be used as a substitute or means of avoiding more applicable personnel action (e.g. promotion, training or reclassification action).

e. Awards are initiated at management's discretion. An employee is not to be told that he/she has been nominated for an award. Outside administrative support should be sought, whenever possible, to preclude inadvertent disclosure of an award nomination. Failure to receive an award is not a basis for grievance unless a violation of applicable provisions has occurred.

f. Recognition must be awarded on a timely basis. Awards should not be used solely as a farewell gesture prompted by departure or transfer of the employee or supervisor.

g. An individual who receives an incentive award is not precluded from future receipt of the same award if latter consideration is based on a different achievement or service performed.

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h. Monetary awards are discouraged for initial employee annual performance evaluations. In addition, back-to-back annual monetary awards should be avoided. Employees nominated for first year monetary awards or employees nominated for back-to-back monetary awards must have an exceptional rating. The recommended award must receive unanimous support from the Incentive Awards Board Committee as well as approval by the Brigade Commander, US Army NATO.

i. Civilian award nominations submitted for approval by a supervisor of a GS/WG civilian assigned to the US Army NATO TDA will be endorsed by the appropriate US Army NATO Battalion Commander or senior G-staff officer having responsibility for that civilian employee. The nomination packet will include a completed DA Form 1256, Incentive Award Nomination and Approval, a one page narrative justification and a proposed citation of nine lines. Times New Roman font, 12 pitch will be used on both the narrative and proposed citation.

3. References.

- a. Department of the Army Regulation 672-20, Incentive Awards dtd 29 Jan 99.
- b. Department of the Army Pamphlet 672-20, Incentive Awards Handbook, dtd 1 Jul 93.
- c. Department of the Army Pamphlet 690-400, Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES), Chapter 4302, dtd 1 Jun 93.

4. Program Objectives.

- a. Encourage civilian employee participation in improving government operations and managing resources to their maximum efficiency.
- b. Recognize and reward civilian employees who have demonstrated exceptional performance and special achievements related to official employment, resulting in significant contributions to the efficiency and economy of the employer.
- c. Stimulate present and future high-level performance of awardees and their peers.

5. Tangible.

a. Performance - US Employees - General Schedule (GS) and Wage Grade (WG) Only. This award consists of a Certificate of Commendation (DA Form 2443) and a monetary award computed as a percentage of the employee's annual salary. As an example, the maximum possible award is presently 10% of the employee's annual salary.

(1) Criteria: Employees with annual performance ratings of Exceptional, Highly Successful or Fully Successful. A Fully Successful rating must have at least one critical element

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exceeded. Performance awards must be given in conjunction with an annual rating; they cannot be given at any other time.

(2) Documentation Required.

(a) Base System employees - DA Form 7223, Base System Civilian Evaluation Report, Part III - Performance Award/Quality Step Increase - within 60 days from approval and a proposed citation of approximately 50 to 70 words in length to include job title and organization of the nominee, award period and a statement of accomplishments.

(b) Senior System employees - DA Form 7222, Senior System Civilian Evaluation Report, Part III - Performance Award/Quality Step Increase - within 60 days from approval and a proposed citation of approximately 50 to 70 words in length to include job title and organization of the nominee, award period and a statement of accomplishments.

(c) Remarks: Employees will not be nominated for a performance award based solely upon a performance appraisal or meeting the established criteria.

b. Performance - Local National (LN) Employees. This award consists of a Certificate of Commendation (DA Form 2443) and a monetary award computed in compliance with Host Nation agreements. As an example, for Belgian employees, the maximum possible award is presently 5% of the employee's annual salary.

(1) Criteria: Performance must exceed the minimum requirements for a successful performance rating and must cover not less than 12 months performance of the same or substantially the same duties. The award justification must include a listing of the major duties critical to job success, a performance statement indicating how the employee exceeded applicable standards, and a statement stating all other duties have been performed satisfactorily.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), an award justification (one page, double-spaced) and a proposed citation 50 to 70 words in length.

(3) Remarks: Employees will not be nominated for an award based solely upon meeting the established criteria.

c. Quality Step Increase (QSI) - US Employees - General Schedule (GS) only. This award consists of a Certificate of Commendation (DA Form 2443) and an additional within-grade increase.

(1) Criteria: Employee must receive an exceptional performance rating. Performance must exceed standards for all major job elements and be of such quality that it could only be achieved by the most exceptional performance.

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(2) Documentation Required:

(a) Base System employees - DA Form 7223, Base System Civilian Evaluation Report, Part III - Performance Award/Quality Step Increase - within 60 days from approval; statement by the nominating supervisor certifying that high-level performance is likely to continue; statement indicating that at the time the Quality Step Increase becomes effective, the employee is expected to remain in the same or similar position at the same grade level for at least 60 days; and a proposed citation 50 to 70 words in length.

(b) Senior System employees - DA Form 7222, Senior System Civilian Evaluation Report, Part III - Performance Award/Quality Step Increase - within 60 days from approval; statement by the nominating supervisor certifying that high-level performance is likely to continue; statement indicating that at the time the Quality Step Increase becomes effective, the employee is expected to remain in the same or similar position at the same grade level for at least 60 days; and a proposed citation 50 to 70 words in length.

(3) Remarks: A Quality Step Increase is not appropriate when an employee is about to receive a promotion, transfer to another position, retire, or is already at the top of the General Schedule pay scale (Step 10).

d. Special Act/Special Service - US and Local National (LN) Employees. This award consists of a Certificate of Commendation (DA Form 2443) and a cash award amount between \$25.00 and \$25,000 depending on the achievement being recognized and is determined by using Tables 7-1 and 7-2 in AR 672-20.

(1) Criteria: Used to recognize short term accomplishments within or outside assigned job responsibilities such as completion of a special project assignment, implementing a new program, temporarily performing additional duties because of increased workload or the absence of other employees, providing superior service and assistance to customers or other employees, following a detail to another position at the same grade level, and at other times when performance or honorary awards are not appropriate.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), completion of award justification (one page, double-spaced) indicating the Extent of Application and Value of Benefit by using Tables 7-1 and 7-2 in AR 672-20, and a proposed citation 50 to 70 words in length. Nominations must be submitted within 30 days after the act, service or achievement to be recognized.

e. On-The-Spot Cash Award (OTS) - US and Local National (LN) Employees. This award consists of a Certificate of Commendation (DA Form 2443) and a monetary award ranging from \$25.00 to \$250.00, or local currency equivalent computed at the official budgetary exchange rate.

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(1) Criteria: Used to recognize daily work site accomplishments such as streamlining, eliminating or modifying an office or operating procedure to improve efficiency, timeliness or effectiveness; accomplishing a specific, one-time or special assignment that required extra effort or resulted in favorable recognition to the office or organization; or implementing a program to improve employee morale or productivity.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), indicating that the award is an On-The-Spot followed by the proposed amount, a brief description (double-spaced) of the employee's achievement, and a proposed citation 50 to 70 words in length (double-spaced). Nominations must be submitted within 30 days after the act, service or achievement to be recognized. Certificate of Commendation (DA 2443) may be presented after the award has been approved.

6. Intangible.

a. Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service - US Employees Only. The Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service is the highest DA honorary award and is equivalent to the military Distinguished Service Medal. The award consists of a gold medal, rosette and certificate signed by the Secretary of the Army.

(1) Criteria: Developed and improved major methods and procedures, developed significant inventions or was responsible for exceptional achievements that affected large-scale savings or were of major significance in advancing the missions of DA, DOD and the Federal Government.

(a) Exhibited great courage and voluntary risk of life in performing an act resulting in direct benefit to the Government or its personnel. A minimum cash award of \$500.00 will accompany the decoration, and the words "FOR BRAVERY" will be inscribed on the reverse side of the medal.

(b) Provided outstanding leadership to the administration of major Army programs in terms of highly successful accomplishment of mission or in the major redirection of objectives or accomplishments to meet unique or emergency situations.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (double-spaced and in paragraph format), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

(3) Remarks: The Secretary of the Army is the approving authority for this award. Only US Direct Hire DA Career Employees are eligible. Nominations should cover a minimum period of one year, except for nominations of bravery, and must be submitted within six months after completion of the period to be cited.

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b. Meritorious Civilian Service - US Employees Only. The Meritorious Civilian Service Award is the second highest DA honorary award and is equivalent to the military Legion of Merit. The award consists of a medal, rosette and certificate.

(1) Criteria: Accomplished supervisory or non-supervisory duties in an exemplary manner, setting a record of achievement, and inspiring others to improve the quality and quantity of their work.

(a) Demonstrated unusual skill and initiative in devising new and improved equipment, work methods and procedures, or inventions that resulted in substantial savings in manpower, time, space, materials or other items of expense, or improved safety or health of the workforce.

(b) Achieved outstanding results in improving the morale and performance of workers.

(c) Exhibited unusual courage or competence in an emergency while performing assigned duties, resulting in direct benefit to the Government and its personnel.

(d) Rendered professional or public relations service of a unique or distinctive character.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (one page double-spaced and in paragraph format), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

(3) Remarks: The Commanding General, US Army NATO is the approving authority for this award. Only US Direct-Hire DA Career Employees are eligible. Nominations should cover a minimum period of one year, except for nominations of bravery, and must be submitted within six months after completion of the period to be cited.

c. Superior Civilian Service Award - US and Local National (LN) Employees. The Superior Civilian Service Award is the third highest DA honorary award and is equivalent to the military Meritorious Service Medal. The award consists of a medal, lapel pin and certificate (DA Form 5655).

(1) Criteria: Performance reflects superior service or achievement, bravery, or heroism of a lesser degree than that recognized by the Meritorious Civilian Service Award. A minimum cash award of \$300.00 will accompany the medal. Indirect-Hire Foreign Nationals are not eligible to receive the monetary portion of the award.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (one page, double-spaced), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

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(3) Remarks: The Commanding General, US Army NATO is the approving authority for this award. Nominations should cover a minimum period of one year, except for nominations of bravery, and must be submitted within six months after completion of the period to be cited.

d. Commander's Award for Civilian Service - US and Local National (LN) Employees. The Commander's Award for Civilian Service is the fourth highest DA honorary award and is equivalent to the military Army Commendation Medal. The award consists of a medal, lapel pin and certificate (DA Form 4689).

(1) Criteria: Accomplished supervisory or non-supervisory duties in an outstanding manner, setting an example of achievement for others to follow.

(a) Demonstrated skill and initiative in devising new or improved equipment, work methods and procedures, or inventions that resulted in considerable savings in manpower, time, space, materials or other items of expense, or improved safety or health of the workforce.

(b) Demonstrated leadership in performing assigned duties that resulted in improved productivity of the unit. Rendered professional or public relations service that resulted in considerable favorable publicity in the area in which the activity or installation is located.

(c) Demonstrated courage or competence in an emergency while performing assigned duties, resulting in benefit to the Government or its personnel.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (one page double-spaced and in paragraph format), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

(3) Remarks: The Brigade Commander, US Army NATO is the approving authority for this award. Nominations should cover a minimum period of one year, except for acts of courage or bravery, and should be submitted within six months after completion of the period to be cited.

e. Achievement Medal for Civilian Service - US and Local National (LN) Employees. The Achievement Medal for Civilian Service is the fifth highest DA honorary award and is equivalent to the Army Achievement Medal. The award consists of a medal, lapel pin and certificate (DA Form 5454).

(1) Criteria: Awarded for noteworthy achievements that are of a lesser degree than that recognized by the Commander's Award.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (double-spaced and in paragraph format), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

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(3) Remarks: The Battalion Commanders, US Army NATO are the approving authority for this award. No minimum time period for nomination.

f. Time Off Award (TOA) - US Employees. Similar to the Special Act/Special Service and On-The-Spot Awards, the Time Off Award authorizes an employee time off in lieu of a monetary award. A certificate of commendation (DA Form 2443) may accompany this award.

(1) Criteria: Awarded for superior accomplishment or other personal effort which contributed to the quality, efficiency or economy of government operations.

(2) Documentation Required: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256) indicating in Block 6a (Other) that the award is a Time Off Award followed by the number of hours, and a brief description of the employee's achievement and resulting benefit(s) on a separate page (double-spaced). The immediate supervisor can approve eight (8) hours of time off for full-time employees. Higher level supervisors may approve up to forty (40) hours per achievement, with a maximum of eighty (80) hours per leave year. Part-time employees will be given prorated time off. TOA exceeding one day will be boarded to ensure compliance with award criteria and regulatory guidelines.

(3) Remarks: It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure the TOA is scheduled and used within one year of the approval date shown on the DA Form 1256. Any unused amount remaining after that time will be forfeited without further compensation. For this reason, supervisors should consider an employee's leave status prior to choosing time off as an award. In those cases where employees have accumulated significant amounts of leave, the supervisor should consider another type of award. The TOA is non-transferable and must also be forfeited upon the employee's departure from the organization

g. Certificate of Achievement - US and Local National (LN) Employees. This award consists of a certificate (DA Form 2442) for both US and LN employees.

(1) Criteria: Accomplished assigned duties in a commendable manner, demonstrating skill and initiative in devising and improving work methods and procedures that resulted in the saving of manpower, time, space or materials.

(a) By personal diligence or initiative, was directly responsible for meeting or exceeding mission requirements or special projects involving unexpected difficulties or operational demands.

(b) Significantly improved employee morale or job performance.

(2) Documentation Requirement: Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256), typewritten justification (one page, double-spaced), and a proposed citation 50-70 words in length.

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(3) Remarks: All award nominations will be boarded to ensure compliance with award criteria and will be approved by the Brigade Commander, USA Elms, ACE.

7. Procedures.

a. For US employees, incentive award nominations will be submitted by the immediate supervisor who will complete Part III of the Base System Civilian Evaluation Report, DA Form 7223, or Part III of the Senior System Civilian Evaluation Report, DA Form 7222. The rater, immediate rater, if applicable, and senior rater should sign the DA Form 7223 or DA Form 7222 in Part II.

b. For Local National employees, incentive award nominations will be submitted by the immediate supervisor who will complete Part I of the Incentive Award Nomination and Approval (DA Form 1256). The supervisor making the recommending should sign the form in Block 7b.

(1) Employee salary and other information required to complete DA Forms 1256, 7223, and 7222 may be obtained from the Civilian Personnel Liaison Office, DCS, G-1, US Army NATO.

c. Supervisors must adhere to the criteria and documentation required for each type of award, particularly the established suspense dates for submission. Awards nominations based on annual performance appraisals, i.e. Performance Awards and Quality Step Increases, must be received by the Civilian Personnel Liaison Office, DCS, G-1, US Army NATO, not later than the established suspense dates. These awards are to be given only at the end of the appropriate rating cycle, unless the employee was not eligible to receive a performance rating during his/her rating cycle. Nominations for Special Act/Special Service and On-The-Spot Awards must be submitted within 30 days following the act, service or achievement to be recognized. The rating cycles and suspense dates for completion of appraisals are as follows:

<u>PAY PLAN GRADE</u>	<u>AWARD/RATING CYCLE</u>	<u>DUE TO CIV PERS LIAISON OFFICE</u>
GS/WG-06 thru 08	1 Feb - 31 Jan	15 Feb
GS/WG-01 thru 05	1 Feb - 30 Apr	15 May
GS/GM-13 and above	1 Jul - 30 Jun	15 Jul
GS-09 thru 12	1 Nov - 31 Oct	15 Nov
Local Nationals (All grades)	1 Nov - 31 Oct	15 Nov

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d. Once an award nomination is received, it is reviewed for content and accuracy. If necessary, the nomination is returned to the supervisor for corrections and/or additional information. The Civilian Personnel Liaison Office prepares a brief employment history of the nominee, and the nomination is then forwarded to the Incentive Awards Committee.

e. The primary responsibility of the Incentive Awards Committee is to review nominations and make non-binding recommendations to the Brigade Commander, US Army NATO. The Incentive Awards Committee is comprised of the Brigade Commander, Executive Officer, Command Sergeant Major, and DCS, G-1, US Army NATO. The XO serves as Chairperson and all members are considered equal, regardless of rank or position, with one vote each. Four members are required to convene the committee. The committee convenes on an as-needed basis, depending on when nominations are received. Minutes of each meeting along with the award nominations are forwarded to the Brigade Commander for approval and signature.

f. Following approval of a monetary award, the Civilian Personnel Liaison (CPL) office will obtain a fund citation from the Budget Section (Civilian Pay Account), ODCSRM, US Army NATO.

g. The CPL will create the Request for Personnel Action (RPA) and process the award by forwarding it to the Civilian Personnel Operations Center as required.

h. The CPL will also prepare the award certificate. Certificates, with the exception of On-The-Spot cash awards and awards requiring higher approving authority, are forwarded to the Brigade Commander, US Army NATO for signature. Certificates must reflect a professional appearance and be free of grammatical and administrative errors. Following signature, certificates are returned to the Civilian Personnel Liaison who will contact the nominating supervisor regarding the status and a future presentation date for the employee.

i. Monetary Awards are prepared by the Defense Finance Accounting Center, Charleston, South Carolina once a copy of the approved award is received from the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center and the Civilian Personnel Operations Center. It may take several pay periods before the employee receives the direct deposit which will be reflected on the Leave and Earnings Statement. If an RPA (Standard Form 52) is on file indicating the employee has departed the organization, a check will be sent to the address indicated on the form.

8. Responsibilities.

a. Supervisor

(1) Establishes a sense of commitment to superior performance and encourages employees to offer suggestions and ideas improving the organization.

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(2) Informs employees of the goals of the Incentive Awards Program and explains the type of awards available and the eligibility requirements for each.

(3) Conducts performance counseling within 30 days of the beginning of the rating period, again at the midpoint of the rating cycle and at other times as required. DA Form 7223-1, Base System Civilian Performance Counseling Checklist/Record, is used for Base System employees and DA Form 7222-1, Senior System Civilian Evaluation Report Support Form, is used for Senior System employees.

(4) Ensures that all deserving employees are recognized and is completely fair and honest when completing appraisals. Periodically assesses employee performance throughout the year and discusses the employee's individual contributions to specific organization goals and whether their level of performance meets, exceeds or fails to meet the standards required to achieve them.

(5) Maintains equity in recognition by assuring no group is systematically or inappropriately overlooked. Awards should be evenly distributed among occupations, between white and blue collar workers, between male and female employees, and between minorities and non-minorities.

(6) Determines the most appropriate type of award for the accomplishment being recognized by reviewing the award criteria and choosing the award that best fits the contribution.

(7) Does not use awards solely as a farewell gesture prompted by the departure of the employee or supervisor. Doing so serves neither as an incentive to the person being recognized nor to others within the organization.

(8) Considers documentation for awards as privileged information which should only be made available to those directly involved in the decision process and certain others on a need-to-know basis. An award nomination should not be discussed with the employee until final approval has been obtained.

(9) Presents awards on a timely basis and at an appropriate ceremony. A proper presentation adds distinction to the award and affirms the belief that management sincerely appreciates and recognizes the employee's contribution.

b. Civilian Personnel Liaison Office, DCS, G-1, US Army NATO.

(1) Provides advice and assistance regarding award submissions, proper documentation and appropriate citation.

(2) Receives nominations from supervisors and reviews for accuracy and compliance with award criteria.

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(3) Prepares brief employment history on nominees for use by the Incentive Awards Committee, to include salary information and previous awards received.

(4) Assembles the Incentive Awards Committee and serves as a non-voting technical advisor. Records minutes of meeting, finalizes the board's recommendations and forwards awards for approval.

(5) Obtains fund certification from the Budget Section for monetary awards once award has been approved, as required.

(6) Delivers award to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center Incentive Awards Administrator. Obtains blank certificates and decoration sets. Prepares award certificates for signature.

(7) Forwards completed award packages to the US Army NATO, SGS and coordinates arrangements for official presentation to the employee.

(8) Requisitions and maintains award certificates, blank forms and devices.

c. Budget Office. Provides certified fund citation. The Incentive Awards Program is funded out of the civilian pay account and is subject to budgetary restrictions.

9. Incentive Awards Committee.

a. Reviews and discusses nominations on an individual basis and makes recommendations to the Brigade Commander, US Army NATO.

b. Determines if the award has been properly documented and whether or not it meets established criteria.

c. Resolves difficult, complex or controversial cases by research, obtaining additional information from the nominating official(s) and comparing the accomplishment to the mission of the activity or organization.

10. Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, Chievres.

a. Provide advice and assistance on all aspects of the Civilian Incentive Awards Program.

b. Forward approved awards to the Civilian Personnel Operations Center, Heidelberg, Germany for administrative preparation of awards for payment.

c. Compiles program statistics and prepares reports to the Office of Personnel Management on a fiscal-year basis. Analyzes results and trends.

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d. Publicizes the Incentive Awards Program and distributes promotional media and materials to create and maintain interest.

11. Brigade Commander, US Army NATO.

a. Serves as the US Army NATO approving authority for all award nominations requiring O-6 and below approval. If the Brigade Commander is the nominating official, the award will be forwarded to the Deputy Commanding General, US Army NATO, for approval. The Brigade Commander has the authority to approve, disapprove, change the type of award, the recommended amount, or make amendments, as necessary.

b. Appoints permanent board members from the organization to serve as voting members on the Civilian Incentive Awards Board Committee.

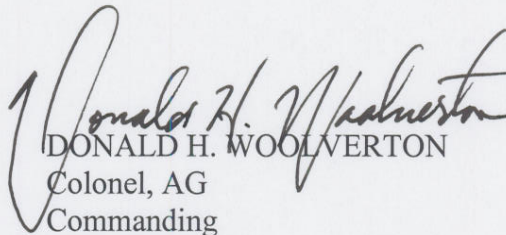
c. Signs all award certificates requiring O-6 and below signature.

12. Deputy Commanding General, US Army NATO.

a. Serves as approving authority for US Army NATO award nominations requiring approval in the absence of the Brigade Commander, or for nominations when the Brigade Commander is the nominating official.

b. Endorses the Incentive Awards Committee's recommendation for those awards requiring approval of the Commanding General, US Army NATO or the Secretary of The Army.

13. Point of contact is USANATO Civilian Personnel Liaison Office at DSN 423-5192/5465.


DONALD H. WOOLVERTON
Colonel, AG
Commanding

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